

Death and Flowers by Carerra_os

Series: [HarringroveApril Prompts 2021 \[20\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Alternate Universe - Gods & Goddesses, First Kiss, First Meetings, M/M, demigod Billy Hargrove, demigod Steve Harrington

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Steve Harrington

Relationships: Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington

Status: Completed

Published: 2021-07-05

Updated: 2021-07-05

Packaged: 2022-03-31 12:48:22

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,807

Publisher: [archiveofourown.org](#)

Summary:

Day 24 Afterlife

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Tiny little blue bells start cropping up as the man flushes bright and splotchy, eyes cutting down. "Right of course." He says more to himself, Billy's eyes widen as the man throws himself to the ground at his feet, knees pressed into the grass, stomach pressed against them, nose in the grass, arms in front of him. "I've come to beg for a favor." Billy blinks, caught off guard, what favor could this man possibly be seeking from him?

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Author's Note:

Day Twenty-Four Afterlife from the Harringrove April Prompts

This is one of my fav au's from April though it barely fits the Afterlife prompt.

The website I used for the flower meaning when I wrote this, just incase anyone is curious about what each one means. <https://www.almanac.com/flower-meanings-language-flowers>

Death and Flowers

Billy is not used to people just walking into his domain, most leave his quarters alone, leave him in peace except the few he is close to. Billy is not expecting anyone though and usually they remain in the entryway until Billy decides to allow them entry deeper into his chambers, except Max who despite their time in the mortal world never learned boundaries. The person he finds easing the gates to his garden open is no one he knows and Billy just watches the pretty man slip in, curious, briefly wondering if he lost his way venturing to the afterlife. Billy has seen souls roaming before but this man is tangible in a way the dead are not.

His eyes scan the room, as he stands by the gate, Billy watching him from the shadows "Hello?" He calls softly, hands twisting up the fabric of his light blue tunic and the dirt around him starts sprouting little blades of grass under his shoes spreading out from him slowly. Billy watches transfixed as that green spreads further, touching the closest bush and it slowly goes from the half dead thing that Billy can manage to grow down here to something fresh and lush with ripe red berries sprout all over it.

"Who are you to come into my personal space without permission?" Billy's voice is booming as he steps out of the shadows and they try to cling to him, trailing after him like a cloak wanting to pull him back in. Billy is not sure how he expects the man to react but he is definitely not expecting the man to relax and give him a smile, a nice smile, one that has interest growing in Billy's gut.

"Are you, um dem, dom, delo-" His face goes all scrunched up as he tries to get his mouth around the name the gods have given him, unable to get past the first few letters, it is cute and charming and Billy feels a smile tugging at his lips as this man struggles and pouts.

"You can call me Billy for now." Billy finally says after a few minutes endlessly amused as the man keeps trying to get it right. Billy prefers his human name anyways, though usually he does not offer its use to someone he just met, only those who have known him a very long time call him Billy, until this pretty boy who Billy finds intriguing. Billy moves closer as the pout melts from those soft pink lips, a wide smile directed his way as big brown eyes raise to meet his stormy ocean blue ones.

"I'm Steve." He finally offers up his own name as purple bittersweet blooms around him, another curious thing that he does not even seem to notice, eyes focused on Billy.

Billy ignores the flowers for now, he will get down to that curiosity soon enough, first he wants his question answered. "That doesn't explain why you're here." He reminds, coming down the small hill to take a seat on a barren rock, the edges of that green brightening his garden creeping closer.

Tiny little blue bells start cropping up as the man flushes bright and blotchy, eyes cutting down. "Right of course." He says more to himself, Billy's eyes widen as the man throws himself to the ground at his feet, knees pressed into the grass, stomach pressed against them, nose in the grass, arms in front of him. "I've come to beg for a favor." Billy blinks, caught off guard, what favor could this man

possibly be seeking from him?

“What makes you think I can do anything for you?” Most do not even know about Billy, how did this man come to know of him, much less find his way into Billy’s personal quarters. Brown eyes glance up at him before they are being dropped back to the earth and orangey yellow marigolds and dark crimson roses start sprouting up, a loss.

“Tommy said you might be able to help.” Billy pinches his face at the murmured answer, Tommy is one of the few who often travels between the underworld and the human world, Billy certainly does not bother to but he cannot fathom why that fool would talk of him. There is something like jealousy curled tight in his belly at the thought of Steve making this venture for a lover, probably after a soul down in the afterlife, how long has he traveled for some human love. The underworld is a dangerous place, full of varying levels, even the afterlife where souls go after judgment can be a perilous place.

“Why would that idiot think I would help you retrieve your lover's soul.” Billy asks angrily, black flames dancing around his feet singeing the grass close by making the flowers within range wilt and he mourns their loss. He knows that feeling will be stronger once Steve leaves and the rest of his garden follows them back to half dead, the trees that have never bore fruit for him without a visit from Persephone are going to be the thing he mourns for the most. He wonders briefly if perhaps Steve is Persephone’s but he has met all of her children and from what he knows she never had any dalliances in the human world, so nothing that would produce a demigod like Steve.

“Well he said you are a son of Hades and I’m not looking to retrieve a lover but I’m looking to retrieve a soul, Dustin’s soul he is like a kid brother, please I’ll do anything.” Rosemary and violets start filling the space as he begs, voice wet and Billy cannot help but wonder how far he would have gone to do the same for Max had Neil gotten to her that night. Billy shakes off the memory, a few more flowers wilting

nearby quickly replaced by more and the whole place is a tempting green beauty except right around Billy until he finally gets his black flames put out and life rushes back into the plants closest to him.

Technically Billy can do it, he should not but he can and Steve does make a tempting sight with his promise of anything. So full of precious life, something there is little of in this part of the underworld. He is beautiful and tempting and Billy wants to keep him, wants him to keep bringing life here, make this gloomy place bright and less like a tomb, more like his father's own chambers where Persephone grows all sorts of things during her time in the underworld. "I can do it but my price is steep." He says standing to move closer to Steve, robes trailing behind him, shadows still clinging, making them look longer.

"I said anything and I meant it!" He cries out as ivy grows up the rocks and the tree trunks faster than before, bushels of geraniums sprout and start to immediately flower, white chrysanthemums flowering as Billy kneels before him.

"You are my price." Billy says, hand gliding through Steve's soft hair down over his cheek to his chin, making him rise out of his deep begging bow.

Big wet brown eyes greet him, tears hitting the ground and soft pinkish white valerian blooms as he nods. "You want my soul in return?" Already willing to just give it away that easily, Billy shakes his head, he has no desire for Steve's soul, he just wants Steve here with him.

"No, not your soul just you, I want you to stay here with me." Billy says, licking over his lips as he lets his thumb drag over Steve's cheek to the corner of his mouth, pretending he is wiping away tears when really he is just using it as an excuse to touch soft mole spotted skin.

"Yes okay, if you return Dustin's soul to him, I'll stay with you."

Steve says arm coming up to scrub at his face, his sleeve going wet as it mops up the tears. Billy lets his hand drop lower to rest against Steve's neck, feeling his steady pulse as starbursts of edelweiss and more daisy sprout.

“You can never leave, you must remain with me always.” Billy says feeling Steve’s pulse give a kick under his thumb as his arm drops away from his face. Billy wants to make sure Steve understands that this is a lifelong commitment. Billy will never let him go. Something about the idea of Steve leaving him already makes him ache and he does not even know him yet.

Steve chews his lip, eyes falling to the ground as red and pink carnations start to bloom “Not even for a visit?” Steve asks whisper soft and he is trembling under Billy’s touch, clearly heartsick at the idea. Billy has not gone back up to the human world in a very long time, not since he was nearly killed and Max dragged him to the cemetery where Hades found them. Steve seems so genuinely sad over the idea of never returning though, he clearly has people he cares about and Billy wonders if he would have gone back to visit had Max not been allowed to stay.

“I suppose a visit would not hurt if I am with you.” Billy decides he can manage it once at the very least he is sure. Hydrangeas brush against his robes along with larkspur and pink roses and Billy hopes to keep him as happy here as he is to agree. Steve's smile is a bright thing, eyes dried and red rimmed from his tears but he shines brightly as looks up at Billy.

“Then we have a deal.” Steve holds his hand out and Billy could shake it, it is not as if he needs the gesture to keep his word or any gesture for that matter but he wants something different. Billy still takes his hand and uses it to pull him a little closer making Steve lean forward as he drags his hand up from his neck to his cheek, Steve’s pulse kicking up as Billy leans in closer as well.

“A kiss to seal it I think.” Billy whispers, watching as Steve’s tongue

flicks out over his lips. Steve gives the tiniest of nods before Billy presses their lips together, a chased thing no more than a promise. Steve flushes a lovely shade of red when Billy pulls back, licking over his own lips as goldenrod, peonies, and morning glory sprout the once barely surviving garden now full of life, bright with varying flowers as Steve drops his eyes back down with a shy smile. Billy looks forward to seeing them spread all throughout his chambers, this is Steve's new home after all, Billy expects him to make himself comfortable.

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Author's Note:

<https://ghostofjellyfishforgotten.tumblr.com/>